

What is claimed is:

1. A franking machine comprising:
a unit for generating franking data; and
a unit for printing data connected to said data generating unit and adapted to receive franking data therefrom,
said printer unit including at least one member for printing data,
wherein the franking machine includes additional means for wireless communication between the print member and the data generating unit to enable identification of the print member by the data generating unit.
2. A franking machine according to claim 1, wherein the wireless communication is effected by means of radio waves.
3. A franking machine according to claim 2, wherein the print member includes at least one identification tag that communicates data identifying the print member by radio waves to the data generating unit when an electromagnetic field is applied to it.
4. A franking machine according to claim 3, wherein the identification tag includes a substrate permanently fixed to the print member and communication means on the substrate.
5. A franking machine according to claim 3, wherein the identification tag is flexible.
6. A franking machine according to claim 3, wherein the data-generating unit includes an electromagnetic field source.
7. A franking machine according to claim 3, wherein the data-generating unit includes a circuit for receiving identification data.

8. A franking machine according to claim 1, wherein the print member is an inkjet printer cartridge including at least one print head.
9. An inkjet printer cartridge for printing data, comprising:
at least one tag identifying the cartridge that communicates identification data to the outside by radio waves, when an electromagnetic field is applied to it, the identification tag including a substrate fixed to the cartridge and communication means on the substrate.
10. An inkjet printer cartridge according to claim 9, further comprising:
a data processing unit which analyzes a stream of printing commands for controlling the print head of the cartridge to authenticate the data to be printed.
11. An inkjet printer cartridge according to claim 10, wherein the processing unit includes means for verifying the integrity of data to be printed.
12. An inkjet printer cartridge according to claim 10, wherein the data processing unit is a miniature unit attached to a thin and flexible printed circuit that is fixed permanently to the printer cartridge.
13. An inkjet printer cartridge according to claim 9, wherein the substrate of the identification tag is permanently fixed to the cartridge so that any subsequent attempt to remove the substrate damages its communication means.
14. An inkjet printer cartridge according to claim 9, wherein the identification tag is flexible.
15. An inkjet printer cartridge according to claim 9, wherein the identification tag contains main identification data.

16. An inkjet printer cartridge according to claim 9, wherein the identification tag contains secondary identification data relating to the use of the cartridge in a franking machine.

17. A method of using a unit for printing data having an inkjet printer cartridge comprising:

- installing an inkjet printer cartridge according to claim 9 in the unit for printing data; and
- using the the unit for printing data.

18. A method of using a unit for printing data that is part of a franking machine having an inkjet printer cartridge comprising:

- installing an inkjet printer cartridge according to claim 9 in the unit for printing data; and
- using the the unit for printing data that is part of a franking machine.

19. A franking machine comprising:

- a unit for generating franking data and a unit for printing data connected to said data generating unit and adapted to receive franking data therefrom,

- said printing unit including at least one member for printing data,

- wherein the franking machine includes:

- means for obtaining data enabling identification of the print member by the data generating unit in a first communication mode,

- means for generating a signature of the franking data by the data generating unit,

- means for encrypting the signature of the franking data by the data generating unit,

- means for sending the franking data and the encrypted signature to the printing unit in a second communication mode, and

- means for decrypting the encrypted signature by the print member.

20. The franking machine according to claim 19, wherein the print member includes means for authenticating franking data
21. A franking machine according to claim 19, wherein the print member includes means for verifying the integrity of the franking data.
22. A franking machine according to claim 19, wherein the print member includes at least one tag identifying said print member which communicates data identifying said member to the data generating unit by radio waves when an electromagnetic field is applied to it.
23. A franking machine according to claim 22, wherein the identification tag includes a substrate fixed permanently to the print member and communication means on the substrate.
24. A franking machine according to claim 19, wherein the data-generating unit includes a circuit for receiving identification data.
25. A franking machine according to claim 22, wherein the data-generating unit includes an electromagnetic field source.
26. A franking machine according to claim 19, wherein the decrypting means of the print member have a prior knowledge of data identifying said print member.
27. A franking machine according to claim 19, wherein the print member includes a data processing unit that includes the decrypting means.
28. A franking machine according to claim 19, wherein the decrypting means are fixed to a thin and flexible printed circuit that is fixed to the print member.

29. A franking machine according to claim 27, wherein the data processing unit is fixed to a thin and flexible printed circuit that is fixed to the print member.

30. A franking machine according to claim 19, wherein the print member is an inkjet printer cartridge including at least one print head.

31. A method of securing data in a franking machine that includes a unit for generating franking data and a unit for printing data connected to said data generating unit and adapted to receive franking data therefrom, said printing unit including at least one member for printing data, comprising:

- obtaining data identifying the print member in a first communication mode by the data generating unit,

- generating a signature of the franking data by the data generating unit,

- encrypting the signature of the franking data by the data generating unit,

- sending the franking data and the encrypted signature to the printing unit in a second communication mode, and

- decrypting the encrypted signature by the print member.